



International Training Programme Conference Support Grant 2025 Final Report

**Nyaz Azeez Awmar, Director & Archaeologist, Koya Civilization
Museum (Kurdistan, ITP 2019)**

**The 10th Word Archaeological Congress (WAC-10) in Darwin, Australia from 22nd To 28th
June, 2025.**

The World Archaeological Congress (WAC) is a non-governmental, not-for-profit organization and is the only archaeological organization with elected global representation. WAC is committed to diversity and to redressing global inequities in archaeology through conferences, publications and scholarly programs. Membership is open to archaeologists, heritage managers, students and members of the public.

WAC International Congresses are held every four years. Sessions focus on contemporary archaeological practice and political matters with opportunities for participants to share strategies of stewardship and develop inclusive policies.

The British Museum

I participated the World Archaeological Congress (WAC-10) being held at Flinders University College of Humanities, Art & Social Sciences, Northern Institute at Charles, Darwin, Australia from 22-28 June 2025.

I am very grateful to The British Museum International Training Programme for the opportunity to attend the international conference.

The letter invitation from WAC-10 By Professor Claire Smith,

Dear Nyaz Azeez Awmar,

We are delighted to invite you to participate in the upcoming 10th World Archaeological Congress, which will take place in Darwin, Australia from June 22-28, 2025.

Hosted jointly by Flinders University and the Northern Institute at Charles Darwin University, this is the first time the World Archaeological Congress will be held in Australia. WAC-10 will be an opportunity to collaborate with diverse colleagues and friends from around the globe and contribute to global policy making. People from some 70 countries participate in WAC Congresses.

*I confirm that we have accepted your oral research presentation: **Deconstructing inequality in scientific communication: The challenge of preserving memories and raising cultural awareness in the region of Koisanjaq/Koya, Iraq.** Your paper has been accepted based upon peer-review by the program and academic committees for WAC-10. The abstracts for your presentations will be published in the book of abstracts for WAC-10. Full papers may be solicited for a volume in the One World Archaeology series with Springer or the refereed journal Archaeologies. Journal of the World Archaeological Congress. Thank you for being part of WAC-10. Your knowledge and skills in archaeology will be a valuable addition to the Congress. We look forward to welcoming you to Darwin, Australia.*

Yours sincerely, Professor Claire Smith Academic Secretary, WAC-10.

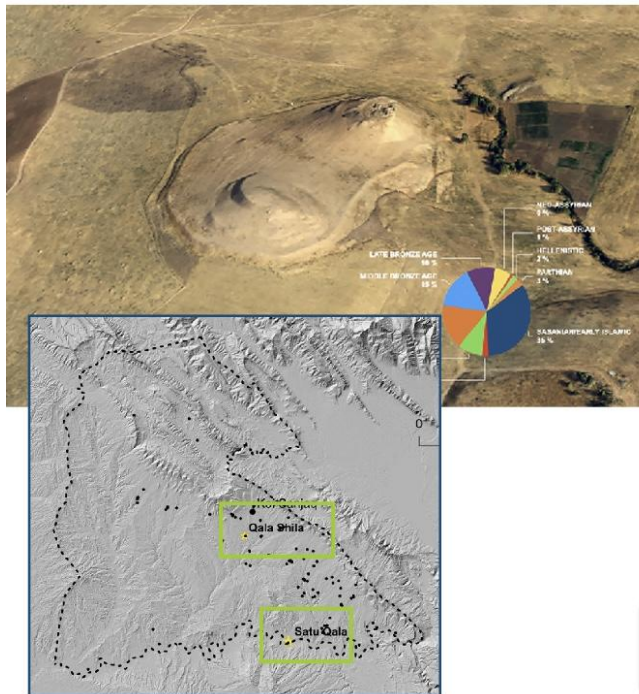
During the Conference, I had the chance to present my paper *Deconstructing inequality in scientific communication: The challenge of preserving memories and raising cultural awareness in the region of Koisanjaq/Koya, Iraq.*

My Presentation:



Satu Qala (2010-2013) and ASK Project (2016-2027)

ASK #7 Qala Shila



ASK #39 Satu Qala



The conservation of cultural heritage and the development of cultural awareness remain key concerns in regions affected by conflict or long-term isolation. In the Kurdish Region of Iraq, after decades of limited access, archaeological investigations have intensified, significantly advancing our understanding of the area. Since 2010, the Koisanjaq/Koya department of the Antiquity Service, in collaboration with the Archaeological Survey of Koisanjaq/Koya Project, has helped highlight the region's deeply multicultural character.

This presentation outlines our fieldwork and current archaeological and anthropological projects, which aim not only to document the ancient past but also to preserve the contemporary cultural landscape. Alongside regional surveys and excavations at Satu Qala and Qala Shila, we emphasize site management, public engagement, and the safeguarding of local memory.

Satu Qala (ASK #39)



1960



2006



2018



The region's recent cultural renaissance - evident in the establishment of universities, heritage institutes, and language academies - has created favourable conditions for international cooperation. The excavations at Satu Qala, likely the ancient Assyrian center of Idu, were among the first international field projects in the Koisanjaq/Koya area. Conducted from 2010 to 2013, they revealed the presence of a previously unknown kingdom and local ruling dynasty, significantly enriching the historical record of the 2nd and 1st millennia BCE.

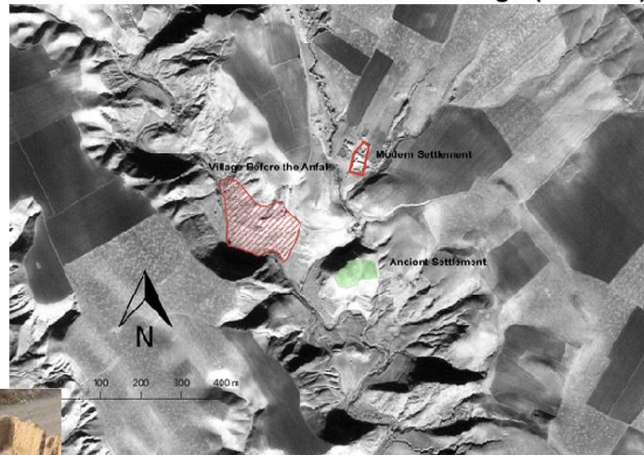
Our initiatives, developed in close cooperation with local academia and stakeholders, pursue four principal goals:

1. Facilitating data exchange between researchers and local communities;
2. Enhancing cultural awareness;
3. Preserving historical narratives, especially regarding recent landscape transformations;
4. Examining how ancient history is received and integrated into local identities.

Oral History : Political Recent Past

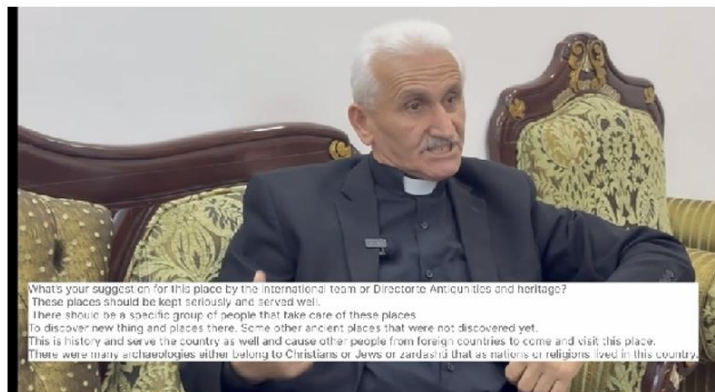
Gird-i Chragh (ASK#62)

Satu Qala (ASK #39)



This phase of archaeological activity unfolds nearly a century after the first scientific investigations in the region. Earlier work evolved from natural-scientific approaches to more culture-oriented methodologies. Yet, while some early archaeologists documented local life—Linda Braidwood at Jarmo, for instance—ethnographic dimensions were often framed as exotic anecdotes for Western audiences.

However, the region's social hybridity—multi-ethnic, multireligious, and structured by both tribal and non-tribal forms—soon fostered new ethnoarchaeological approaches. Ralph Solecki's work at Shanidar exemplifies this. He combined archaeological analysis with systematic ethnographic inquiry into seasonal mobility, pastoral practices, and material culture. He also recorded Kurdish musical traditions, producing a corpus that reflects regional and social diversity and provides access to alternative historiographic frameworks.



For the first time WAC-10 is an opportunity to collaborate with diverse colleagues and friends from around the globe and contribute to global policy making. Anyone who is interested in the past can participate. People from more than 70 countries participate in WAC Congresses. A cultural program will run parallel to the academic program to showcase the diversity and richness of Indigenous Australian cultures, providing an opportunity to learn directly from Aboriginal teachers.

Congress language:

The official language of the Congress is English. However, presentations can be in any language and PowerPoint presentations in languages other than English needed to include English subtitles.

The Congress included:

- Diverse academic program that includes all forms of archaeology.
- Cultural Festival that showcases the visual and performing arts of Indigenous peoples in Australia and globally.
- Tours to archaeological sites in dramatic landscapes, guided by traditional custodians and archaeology site specialists.
- Aboriginal teachers sharing stories, artworks and ancient traditions spanning more than 65,000 years.
- Social events and policy-making.
- Dedicated support for Indigenous participants, students and for people from low-exchange-rate countries.
- Selected papers published by Springer in One World Archaeology book series.

Acknowledgement of country

WAC-10 was held on the traditional and unceded lands of the Larrakia people. They acknowledge Traditional Owners of Country throughout Australia and globally and recognize their continuing connections to lands, waters and skies. They pay their respects to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, and to Elders past and present.

The goals of WAC are to:

- Promote interest in the past in all countries
- Encourage the development of regionally-based histories
- Foster international academic interaction

WAC is committed to diversity and to redressing global inequities in archaeology through conferences, publications and scholarly programs. It has a special interest in protecting the cultural heritage of Indigenous peoples, minorities and economically disadvantaged countries, and encourages the participation of Indigenous peoples, researchers from economically disadvantaged countries and members of the public.

The WAC discussion considers how archaeology, as both a discipline and a practice, can respond to these crises with resilience, relevance, and responsibility. Panelists reflected on the role of archaeological knowledge in promoting justice, equity, and sustainability - critical themes and debates that shaped the Congress as participants considered how archaeology can transcend boundaries and contribute meaningfully to global change. I can say that its helpful for the entire countries a great service in museums. I can benefit after participating in the conference. I received good experience and information, in this important conference. This conference is very important for museums around the world, which integrates with our museum international strategy, especially to address the museums strengths and challenges.

My Experience Coming from the Conference:

A conference experience refers to the interaction and learning that comes from attending or participating in a meeting where topics of common interest are discussed, often in a professional or academic setting. It can include presenting ideas, sharing knowledge, networking, and exploring new trends in a specific field.

Conferences are a great opportunity to acquire new knowledge and skills, whether through presentations by speakers or interaction with other attendees.

Networking:

The opportunity to meet other professionals and make valuable contacts is an important part of the conference experience.

Conferences can be a source of inspiration and motivation, especially when it comes to topics that attendees are passionate about. The opportunity to participate in discussions, Q&As, and other interactive activities can enrich the experience. The planning, promotion, and execution of a conference, whether in-person or virtual, are crucial elements to ensuring a positive experience.

Types of Conference Experience:

In-Person Conferences: These are held in a physical location and offer the opportunity for face-to-face interaction.

Virtual Conferences: These are delivered through online platforms and can be a convenient and accessible alternative.

Specialized Conferences: These focus on specific areas of knowledge, such as customer experience, technology, or literature.

General Conferences:

These cover broader topics and may be of interest to a more diverse audience.

Examples of conference experiences:

Attend a conference on artificial intelligence and learn about the latest trends and applications of this technology.

Participate in a panel discussion on customer experience and share ideas with other industry professionals.

Present a research paper at an academic conference and receive feedback from peers.

Organize a virtual conference on digital marketing and coordinate teams to ensure a smooth experience for participants.



Participants at the Conference from the website of WAC-10

I am very happy that now I can be in contact with new researchers in this field and share information with the group formed around this conference.

I am very grateful for the opportunity provided and supported by the Marie-Louse von Motesiczky Charitable Trust.